

## CLAIM AMENDMENTS

### IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application or previous response to office action:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method for increasing the safety of operation of an electrical component, ~~in particular of electrical components in a vehicle~~, comprising the steps of:

- generating a control signal by a microcontroller to actuating actuate a load ~~via a microcontroller~~,

- amplifying the control signal;

- detecting actively a change in the switching state of a relevant load, and

- while the microcontroller is in a sleep mode detecting a disturbance of said control signal by detecting a change in the amplified control signal through a wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller.

- performing diagnostics irrespective of the instant of actuation of the load by the microcontroller and/or by a superordinate control unit.

2. **(Cancelled)**

3. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to Claim 1, wherein ~~a diagnostic feedback is applied to an input for the wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller is a non-maskable interrupt as diagnostic readback portinput.~~

4. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to Claim 1, wherein ~~switch-in or disconnection turning on and off~~ of a load is performed by a vehicle electrical system control unit, wherein a central locking motor ~~preferably being is~~ actuated as the load.

5. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to Claim 1, wherein diagnostic means are used to determine whether a fault state can be eliminated by the microcontroller,

wherein remedial action being initiated by a ~~superordinate system~~ control unit if the microcontroller fails.

6. (Currently Amended) A device for increasing the safety of operation of an

electrical component in a circuit, ~~particularly of electrical components in a~~

~~vehicle, comprising wherein~~

~~a load is connected to a microcontroller;~~

~~an amplifier having an input coupled to an output port of said microcontroller;~~

~~a load coupled to an output of said amplifier; for actuation, comprising and~~

~~means of for actively detecting a change in switching state of the load which are designed to act, independently of the instant of active triggering of a microcontroller,~~

~~upon the microcontroller and/or a superordinate control unit of an output signal~~

~~generated by said amplifier, wherein said means for actively detecting a change are~~

~~coupled with an interrupt input of said microcontroller.~~

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 6, wherein ~~the additional hardware compared to known system is essentially combined in the microcontroller~~ the means for actively detecting a change comprise a resistor network coupled between the output of the amplifier and a ground potential.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A device for increasing the safety of operation of an electrical component, in particular of electrical components in a vehicle, comprising:

- a microcontroller for actuating a load via a-an amplifier-microcontroller,

- means for detecting actively a change in the switching state of a relevant load, and

- wherein the microcontroller is operable to be put in a sleep mode and while in sleep mode detects a disturbance of said control signal which causes a change in the amplified control signal through a wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller. ~~means for performing diagnostics irrespective of the instant of actuation of the load by the microcontroller and/or by a superordinate control unit.~~

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 11, wherein the wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller is a diagnostic feedback is applied to an input for a non-maskable interrupt as diagnostic readback port~~input~~.

14. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 11, further comprising a vehicle electrical system control unit for ~~switch-in or disconnection turning on and off~~ of a load, and a central locking motor ~~preferably~~ being actuated as the load.

15. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 11, comprising a ~~superordinate system~~ control unit coupled with said means for performing diagnostic to determine whether a fault state can be eliminated by the microcontroller, wherein the system control unit is operable to initiate remedial action being initiated by the superordinate control unit if the microcontroller fails.

16. (NEW) The method according to Claim 1, wherein to eliminate a fault state upon detection of a disturbance, the microcontroller de-activates the load.

17. (NEW) The method according to Claim 16, wherein upon detection of a disturbance, the microcontroller is switched from a sleep mode into an active mode and resets said control signal.